

MDR Tracking Number: M5-04-3964-01

Under the provisions of Section 413.031 of the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, Title 5, Subtitle A of the Texas Labor Code, effective June 17, 2001 and Commission Rule 133.305 titled Medical Dispute Resolution - General and 133.308 titled Medical Dispute Resolution by Independent Review Organizations, the Medical Review Division assigned an IRO to conduct a review of the disputed medical necessity issues between the requestor and the respondent. The dispute was received on 07-20-04.

The Medical Review Division has reviewed the IRO decision and determined that **the requestor prevailed** on the issues of medical necessity. Therefore, upon receipt of this Order and in accordance with §133.308(r)(9), the Commission hereby orders the respondent and non-prevailing party to **refund the requestor \$650.00** for the paid IRO fee. For the purposes of determining compliance with the order, the Commission will add 20 days to the date the order was deemed received as outlined on page one of this order.

In accordance with §413.031(e), it is a defense for the carrier if the carrier timely complies with the IRO decision.

Based on review of the disputed issues within the request, the Medical Review Division has determined that **medical necessity was the only issue** to be resolved. The Tramadol, Skelaxin and aloe vera were found to be medically necessary. The respondent raised no other reasons for denying reimbursement for the above listed services.

On this basis, and pursuant to §§402.042, 413.016, 413.031, and 413.019 of the Act, the Medical Review Division hereby ORDERS the respondent to pay the unpaid medical fees in accordance with the fair and reasonable rate as set forth in Commission Rule 133.1(a)(8) plus all accrued interest due at the time of payment to the requestor within 20 days of receipt of this order. This Order is applicable to dates of service 07-22-03 through 09-22-03 in this dispute.

The respondent is prohibited from asserting additional denial reasons relative to this Decision upon issuing payment to the requestor in accordance with this Order (Rule 133.307(j)(2)).

This Findings and Decision and Order are hereby issued this 23rd day of September 2004.

Debra L. Hewitt
Medical Dispute Resolution Officer
Medical Review Division

DLH/dlh

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

September 15, 2004

Rosalinda Lopez
Program Administrator
Medical Review Division
Texas Workers Compensation Commission
7551 Metro Center Drive, Suite 100, MS 48
Austin, TX 78744-1609

RE: Injured Worker:
MDR Tracking #: M5-04-3964-01
IRO Certificate #: IRO4326

The Texas Medical Foundation (TMF) has been certified by the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) as an independent review organization (IRO). The Texas Workers' Compensation Commission (TWCC) has assigned the above referenced case to TMF for independent review in accordance with TWCC §133.308 which allows for medical dispute resolution by an IRO.

TMF has performed an independent review of the rendered care to determine if the adverse determination was appropriate. In performing this review, relevant medical records, any documents utilized by the parties referenced above in making the adverse determination, and any documentation and written information submitted in support of the appeal was reviewed.

The independent review was performed by a TMF physician reviewer who is board certified in orthopedic surgery which is the same specialty as the treating physician, provides health care to injured workers, and licensed by the Texas State Board of Medical Examiners in 1950. The TMF physician reviewer has signed a certification statement stating that no known conflicts of interest exist between him or her and any of the treating physicians or providers or any of the physicians or providers who reviewed the case for a determination prior to the referral to TMF for independent review. In addition, the reviewer has certified that the review was performed without bias for or against any party to this case.

Clinical History

This patient was injured on ____ and underwent a lumbar fusion with instrumentation. He continues to have pain, soreness, and tightness in his back and is receiving ongoing treatment with Tramadol Hydrochloride 50 milligrams, Skelaxin 400 milligrams, and Coats Aloe Liniment.

Requested Service(s)

Tramadol, Skelaxin, and aloe vera for dates of service 07/22/03 through 09/22/03

Decision

It is determined that the use of Tramadol, Skelaxin, and aloe vera was medically necessary to treat this patient's medical condition from 07/22/03 through 09/22/03.

Rationale/Basis for Decision

The patient history available in the documentation submitted is that "he continues to have pain, soreness, and tightness in his back". The medications prescribed are, or can be, used for such symptoms and there is a predominance of evidence supporting the legitimacy of these prescriptions. Therefore, the use of Tramadol, Skelaxin, and aloe vera was medically necessary to treat this patient's medical condition from 07/22/03 through 09/22/03.

Sincerely,